

Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council

COMMUNIQUE 15 AUGUST 2025

The Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council (the Council) was convened today in-person in Sydney for its first meeting since the swearing-in of the 48th Federal Parliament. The Council agreed that it is critical that all governments and portfolios collaborate to achieve progress on gender equality and end gender-based violence in Australia.

The Council acknowledged all women and children killed by violence in Australia in 2025 and years before, and that this violence must end. The Council reaffirmed all jurisdictions' commitment to the *National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032* (the National Plan), as the framework guiding all governments to achieve a shared vision of ending gender-based violence in one generation. The Council recognised that all parts of the Australian community have a role to play in addressing the national crisis of gender-based violence.

The Council welcomed its new co-chair, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, Commonwealth Minister for Social Services and new members:

- The Hon Rebecca White MP (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Ged Kearney MP (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Jane Howlett MP (Tasmania)
- The Hon Jessica Stojkovski MLA (Western Australia)
- The Hon Simone McGurk MLA (Western Australia)

National Plan Implementation Progress

Minister Plibersek (Commonwealth) acknowledged the ongoing efforts by state and territory governments and thanked them for their support to drive meaningful change to improve the safety of women and children.

Ministers discussed the efforts underway across each jurisdiction focusing on the Council's agreed priority areas of men's behaviour change, risk assessment, and workforce, as well as the delivery of funding to frontline services. Ministers agreed to continue to progress these efforts collaboratively, to improve national consistency and increase the effectiveness of responses to gender-based violence.

Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses Federation Funding Agreement 2021-2030

The Council acknowledged the importance of the partnership between the Commonwealth and jurisdictions in delivering frontline family, domestic and sexual violence services.

Ministers agreed that delivering new funding to services as quickly as possible to support delivery of services on the ground and measuring the impact of those investments, is a key priority for all jurisdictions.

Update on National Risk Assessment Framework and National Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Interventions

Ministers discussed progress on the development of a best-practice National Risk Assessment Framework (the Framework) and National Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Interventions. Development of these tools was a commitment of National Cabinet, as key reforms to improve national consistency and drive best practice when responding to perpetrators of gender-based violence.

The Council agreed to support the continued development of the Framework, ensuring alignment and consistency in how jurisdictions identify risks of violence. This work will improve both victim-survivor's safety and perpetrator accountability.

The Council also agreed to accelerate work on national standards for men's behaviour change interventions to improve quality and practice and deliver an effective, evidence-based and more consistent approach to addressing men's use of violence across all jurisdictions.

Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence (FDSV) Workforce

At its last meeting the Council agreed it is a priority to build the specialist FDSV workforce and expand workforce capability of other services and sectors. Minister Harrison (New South Wales) led a discussion on how jurisdictions are delivering this priority by supporting the FDSV workforce and adjacent workforces.

Overseeing the response to the Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches

On 6 September 2024, National Cabinet agreed to a range of actions to accelerate efforts to end gender-based violence as that were guided by the Rapid Review of Prevention Approaches: *Unlocking the Prevention Potential: Accelerating action to end domestic family and sexual violence*.

Ministers discussed progress on efforts underway across portfolios to deliver on National Cabinet outcomes, such as strengthening responses to high-risk perpetrators. These outcomes form part of governments' response to the Rapid Review and contribute to a strengthened and evidence-based approach to preventing and ending gender-based violence.

The Council also agreed on its approach to reporting on governments' collective efforts to progressively respond to the Rapid Review recommendations. The Council will report progress to National Cabinet by the end of 2025. The agreed approach includes engaging across portfolios and different levels of government.

Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence

Ministers noted the update on the finalisation of Our Ways - Strong Ways - Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan to End Family, Domestic, and Sexual Violence (Our Ways - Strong Ways - Our Voices). Timely delivery of Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices is important and Ministers agreed to progress it through their governments as a matter of priority.

Ministers were advised that the Department of Social Services has engaged the Coalition of Peaks, operating through an auspice arrangement with the National Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation, to establish the National Peak Body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family Safety.

South Australia's Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Minister Hildyard (South Australia) provided an update on South Australia's Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (the Royal Commission), noting its extensive engagement across the state since July 2024 and highlighting the recent release of the *Silence and Inaction: Children and young people's experience of violence and systemic failure in South Australia* report.

Minister Hildyard confirmed the Royal Commission's final report and recommendations will be provided to the South Australian government imminently. Minister Hildyard noted she will continue briefing Ministerial colleagues following the report's release and affirmed the South Australian government's commitment to addressing domestic, family and sexual violence and championing the safety of women and children.

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission

The Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner Micaela Cronin provided an update on the development of this year's Yearly Report to Parliament, and an overview of the key themes arising from the Multicultural Roundtable discussion held in Sydney on 7 August.

Community attitudes towards gender equality in Australia

The Council discussed the impact of different community attitudes on achieving gender equality, as well as the challenges of emerging resistance to gender equality. Ministers agreed that a detailed, strategic discussion on this challenge will be the key focus of the next Council meeting. This discussion will be informed by whole of government engagement by each jurisdiction.

Attendees

- Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Rebecca White MP (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Ged Kearney MP (Commonwealth)
- The Hon Jodie Harrison MP (New South Wales)
- The Hon Robyn Cahill OAM MLA (Northern Territory)
- The Hon Amanda Camm MP (Queensland)
- The Hon Katrine Hildyard MP (South Australia)
- The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP (Victoria)
- The Hon Jessica Stojkovski MLA (Western Australia)

The Hon Jinson Charls MLA (Northern Territory), the Hon Fiona Simpson MP (Queensland), the Hon Jane Howlett MP (Tasmania) and the Hon Simone McGurk MLA (Western Australia) sent their apologies. Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Australian Capital Territory) attended the opening of the meeting and was then represented by an official, as was Minister Howlett.

The Commonwealth Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner, Ms Micaela Cronin, attended the meeting in an ex-officio capacity.